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CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
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(FINAL) Minutes of the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)

Date: Regular meeting held Tuesday, February 7, 2023.

Location: Via Zoom

Present: David Woods, Chair; Barry Hersh, Elena Kalman Rebecca Shannonhouse and Dee Davis Oberwetter, Commissioners; Claire Fishman, Alternate and Judy Norinsky, President of Historic Neighborhood Preservation.

NOTE: Ms. Davis has resigned her seat on the Commission and this will be her last meeting

I. Call to Order.

Mr. Woods called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and introduced the first item on the agenda.

II. Approval and/or Corrections to December 6, 2022 Meeting Minutes.

The Commission considered the minutes of the December 6, 2022 Regular Meeting. There were no comments or modifications recommended.

A motion was made by Ms. Kalman to accept the minutes, seconded by Mr. Hersh and the vote was carried unanimously.

III. New Business.

A. Stanwich Church - Storefront Façade Changes.

Location: 252 Atlantic Street - Downtown Historic District.

Presenters: Wes Lyvers, Stanwich Church and Granberg & Associates Architects.

Mr. Woods made some brief comments about the application and introduced Mr. Lyvers.

Mr. Lyvers, along with his team, Ira Granberg, Lead Architect and Todd Gambino, Owner's representative, made a presentation and answered questions from the Commission.

Mr. Woods provided comments stating that the Woolworth building is part of the Downtown Stamford Historic District and read a building description from the nomination form. Mr. Woods also provided details of building standards as set by the Downtown Stamford Historic District.

After considerable discussion, Mr. Woods called for a motion to accept the five (5) items discussed for the Resolution and support for the project.

Mr. Hersh made a motion to accept the five (5) items discussed for the Resolution and support for the project; seconded by Ms. Davis and the vote was carried unanimously.

The Commission agreed on the following Resolution for the Stanwich Church project:

At the HPAC regular meeting held Tuesday, February 7, 2023, the Commission was presented with the preliminary design for alterations to the 252 Atlantic Street building. This building was known as the Woolworth Building for many years, dating back to the early 1950's. It was empty for many years and was converted to a Safavieh Furniture Store in the early 2000's. It is listed as a contributing structure on the Downtown Stamford Historic District Nomination Form. The property also sits within the Architectural Review Downtown Design District. These considerations were important to the Commission in its review. The following is a record of the Commission's discussion.

The Commission, by unanimous vote, expressed its gratitude for the presentation and supports the design concept plans for the renovations proposed. The Commission further made the following recommendations on the design of some of the details as presented. We provide the following notes and considerations:

- 1. It was agreed the old "Woolworth" sign band can be removed. In its place the owner is proposing a terra cotta detail frieze(?) that takes into consideration the precast panels above, and other similar details on the building. The Commission requested the architect return with a more detailed development of this panel and a final recommendation for the material and color.*
- 2. The architect noted the "gray" colored material above the canopy and in the same plane as the storefront is intended to be glass. It is understood the owner will follow the downtown guidelines for clear glass and a large clear glass storefront. It was described as being 12 ft. high of glass below the traditional sign band.*

The design also shows an additional metal spandrel panel that is above the windows and below the terra cotta frieze band. It is set back from the frieze band. The Commission generally agreed this panel can be "black" as requested. The Commission further requested the architect return with details and a detailed section of this storefront.

- 3. The owner noted the upper windows will be replaced in like and kind to the original. This was supported by the Commission.*
- 4. There was considerable discussion about the brick on the façade. The owner's architect and project manager claimed 70% of the brick will need to be removed and replaced in order to repair structural damage behind the brick. This scope of work was questioned. The owner agreed the team will return with more detailed information about the repair and restoration of the brick. The Commission noted the owner's interest in replicating the existing brick (including size, texture, & color) and the details as they are visible now.*
- 5. There was discussion about the canopies (4 sections) that are designed for the open storefront areas between the columns. The owner noted they are seeking an industrial look to the canopy, similar to the interior. The Commission was in general agreement with this direction, noting it can look more modern. The Commission further requested the architect return with details and a detailed section of the canopy.*

In granting support for the project design, the Commission encourages the owners to submit the historic building to the City's Cultural Resources Inventory.

As noted above, the Commission requests that that development team return to a future meeting to provide progress plans and details for the items noted.

HPAC understands the Land Use Boards may have other considerations for review that are beyond the scope of HPAC recommendations. Those may include bonuses, setbacks and parking, that are in the Zoning Code and not a part of the HPAC review.

IV. Old Business.

A. Cedar Heights Bridge Commemorative Plaque / Interpretive Signage.

Presenter: Lou Casolo, Engineering Bureau Chief/City Engineer, City of Stamford.

Mr. Woods stated he spoke to Mr. Casolo and told him he did not need to attend the meeting.

Mr. Woods made note of a photograph with the Memorandum of Agreement that referenced the old Wire Mill Bridge, which is being restored as the Cedar Heights Bridge. On the original structure, there was a plaque in memoriam of William R. Michaels, who served as a Second Selectman for Stamford. Mr. Woods stated it was not quite understood if this plaque will be reinstalled on the new bridge.

Mr. Woods provided comments on the new plaque that it seems to contain more information than necessary. Mr. Woods asked the Commission for their thoughts and comments on suggested text for the new plaque.

After some discussion, Mr. Woods stated he would send an email to Mr. Casolo asking about the plans for original plaque from the Wire Mill Bridge and that Ms. Norinsky would look at the text for the new plaque to edit the wording.

B. 16 Remington Street - Critical Reconstruction.

Presentation has not been confirmed as of January 31, 2023.

This item was **TABLED** to the March 7, 2023 meeting as a representative for the project was not in attendance.

Mr. Woods provided comments regarding concerns about the height of the addition at the back of the building and the windows on the building at the back and the side elevations of the building in front being a bit too modern. Mr. Woods asked the Commission to look over the materials focusing on these two items.

C. Update: Historic Preservation Capital Grant Program.

Presenter: Dee Davis, Commissioner or David Woods, Commission Chair.

Ms. Davis provided an update stating she reached out to Brad Schide, Preservation Connecticut, but she did not hear back and stated she would forward his response to the Commission. Ms. Davis stated there were three (3) applications still in process. Ms. Davis further stated that the Commission's part in the program is now over.

D. Update: Historic Brochure Progress.

Presenter: Rebecca Shannonhouse, Commissioner.

Ms. Shannonhouse stated she sent a draft to Mary Dunne, SHPO, and Ms. Dunne said the application could be submitted. The final part missing is the budget and the timeline. Ms. Shannonhouse stated she would put something together and send out to the Commission for review before the final submission.

E. Update: Demolition Permit Applications.

No Demolition Permit Applications or as may properly be introduced before the Commission.

Mr. Woods stated he received a few residential applications which do not require Commission approval.

Mr. Woods made note that the Hunt Building has been demolished, which is a disappointment. The property will be kept as open space.

Mr. Woods also mentioned that the barn near the Long Ridge Tavern has also been demolished.

F. Miscellaneous Future Projects - of Note.

1785 & 1799 Summer Street.

1911 Summer Street.

Mr. Woods stated he has not received any information on either of the above referenced projects.

Mr. Woods mentioned there is a walk-through of 160 Atlantic Street setup by Vineeta Mathur, Principal Planner, on Thursday, February 9, 2023. Mr. Woods stated he would forward the email received with the details.

Ms. Shannonhouse asked about HPAC's role ensuring that particular City-owned properties get on Cultural Resources Inventory (CRI).

Ms. Norinsky stated at their last meeting, Sue Halpern and Mark Diamond said they would work on a list of properties to be included on the CRI.

The Commission had a brief discussion on the CRI and some of the City-owned properties.

As this was Ms. Davis's last meeting, she wished the Commission well. Mr. Woods thanked her for her work on the Commission.

V. Adjournment.

Ms. Kalman made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Hersh and the vote was carried unanimously.

Mr. Woods adjourned the meeting at 8:59 p.m. (There was no further discussion.)

Respectfully submitted

February 16, 2022

Rebecca Shannonhouse, Secretary
Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

Meetings are normally held on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for March 7, 2023 via Zoom.